

Last word

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The etiquette of online bragging

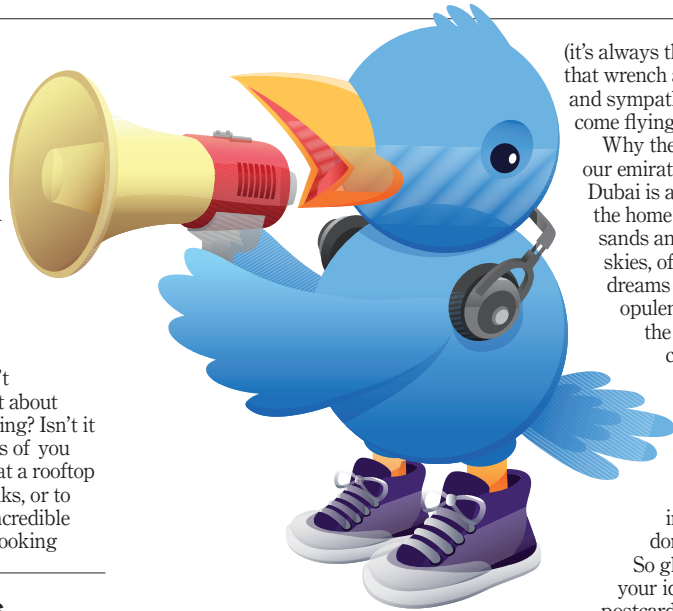
Rob Garratt wonders why his Twitter followers back home don't dig Dubai

Living in Dubai, it's very easy to brag. With year-round sunshine, tax-free salaries and world-class nightlife and entertainment, who doesn't occasionally want to shout about how much fun they're having? Isn't it natural to take a few snaps of you and your mates lounging at a rooftop bar during post-work drinks, or to share the details of that incredible brunch with 18 different cooking

'Non-residents just don't get the Dubai fairytale plot'

stations, that soaring daily sunset or that celeb you happened to bump into at the mall? Surely it isn't surprising that you'd want to share these picture-postcard experiences with your mates back home? Maybe put them on Facebook, Twitter or Flickr, say?

What is surprising, to Dubaibians at least, is that such blatant self-promotion so often goes entirely unnoticed by the wider world. I mean, I'd want to know what my friends were doing if they suddenly upped sticks and moved abroad. A recent example; my Scottish flatmate answered a Facebook request from



(it's always the little things that wrench at the heart), and sympathetic replies will come flying in.

Why the mistrust of our emirate? Because Dubai is a fairytale land, the home of golden sands and crystal skies, of architects' dreams and consumer opulence. Meanwhile the fast-paced, click-heavy nature of modern social networking means people have little time for posts and information they don't understand. So glancing at your idyllic picture-postcard lifestyle

an old acquaintance asking all their virtual friends to post a Christmas Day view from their window, to 'build up a picture of the country' each person was living in. His glittering snap from our balcony, showing clear blue waters and soaring tower blocks, wasn't even mocked; just entirely ignored. It turns out that people don't like a smarty pants after all.

It's not the first time I've noticed this phenomenon, and I think it has something to do with Dubai. People are suspicious of the city. People are suspicious of a sudden escape from depressing weather and a more-depressing climate of austerity measures and rising redundancies. And, let's face it, people are jealous. Don't believe me? Post something online about how blue you are, how much you miss your friends, family and Wispa chocolate bars

leaves most readers speechless, confused and, ultimately, bored. Non-residents just don't get the Dubai fairytale plot.

I have a plan: if my mates can't relate to Never Never Land from afar, I'll use another tactic. When I make my next trip back to the UK, I'll lure everyone round for a welcome-home party – and then sting them where it hurts with the longest projector show known to man.

Rob Garratt is our Music & Nightlife editor. Now we know why he won't stop posting his own stories on Twitter.

Thoughts? Comments?
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